

Message Text

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ORIGIN OES-07

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 EUR-12 EA-10 ISO-00 L-03 SIG-01
DLOS-09 CG-00 DOTE-00 SP-02 AID-05 CIAE-00 INR-10
NSAE-00 DODE-00 EB-08 PM-05 COME-00 TRSE-00 /083 R

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EA/ANZ-MR. HURWITZ
L/OES-MRS. HOINKES

-----035126 160507Z /13

P R 152321Z FEB 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY SUVA
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
CINCPAC HONO
HICOMTERPACIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 040463

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PLDS, PORG, EFIS, XP, XU, PP

SUBJECT: SOUTH PACIFIC REGIONAL FISHERIES AGENCY

REFS: A. PT MORESBY 0117; B. PT MORESBY 0118;
C. PT MORESBY 0150; D. PT MORESBY 0216
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1. EXCELLENT REPORTING REFTELS MUCH APPRECIATED. WITH
REGARD TO RELEASE OF MATERIAL REQUESTED REF B, DEPT
HAS NO OBJECTION TO USE OF BACKGROUND INFO IN DISCUS-
SIONS WITH GPNG, OR PREPARATION OF BACKGROUNDER AT
EMBASSY'S DISCRETION, FOR PRESENTATION TO THEM.
REVIEW OF MATERIAL, HOWEVER, LEADS US TO BELIEVE IT
BETTER NOT TO RELEASE TEXT VERBATIM, SINCE SEVERAL
POINTS (IN PARTICULAR DESCRIPTIONS OF U.S. INTERESTS
IN EASTERN PACIFIC) COULD, IF PRESENTED IN SLIGHTLY
DIFFERENT CONTEXT, SERVE TO GIVE DABB AMMUNITION IN

HIS INTERNAL DEBATES.

2. UPON RECEIPT REFS A AND C, DEPT OFFICERS CALLED IN GNZ OFFICIAL JOHN LARKINDALE TO DISCUSS SITUATION. LARKINDALE STATED GNZ QUITE CONCERNED OVER GPNG STANCE, AND THAT THEIR HIGH COMMISSIONER IN PORT MORESBY WAS QUITE ACTIVE IN ATTEMPTING TO TURN SITUATION AROUND. HE STATED THAT "THINGS HAD LOOKED VERY

BLEAK" IN EARLY JANUARY, BUT THAT GNZ NOW FELT THINGS WERE "UNDER CONTROL." GNZ SOMEWHAT HOPEFUL THAT MARCH MEETING CAN STILL TAKE PLACE, ALTHOUGH THEY DO NOT SEE THIS AS A CERTAINTY BY ANY MEANS.

3. IN RESPONSE TO DIRECT QUESTION, LARKINDALE STATED OPINION THAT CONTINUED LOW PROFILE BY US WAS BEST TACTICAL APPROACH. HE BELIEVED THAT AT SOME POINT US INTERVENTION MIGHT BE NEEDED TO PURSUADE GPNG TO MODIFY POSITION ON SOME SUBSTANTIVE ASPECT OF NEGOTIATION AND THAT WE SHOULD RESERVE THAT POLITICAL CAPITAL UNTIL ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY. LARKINDALE REPEATED VIEW OF GNZ THAT SOLUTION COULD BE FOUND TO SUBSTANTIVE PROBLEMS SEPARATING US AND GNPG. CONFIDENTIAL

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HE STATED THAT IN CONVERSATION REPORTED FROM PORT MORESBY DFAT LEGAL ADVISER GEOFFRY DABB HAD MISREPRESENTED CERTAIN GNZ POSITIONS AS WELL AS THOSE OF US AND THAT IN HIS OPINION THIS WAS AN INDICATION OF WEAKNESS ON DABB'S PART.

4. IN RESPONSE TO ABOVE, DEPT STATED OPINION THAT THERE SEEMED TO BE CONSIDERABLE DIALOGUE TAKING PLACE IN PORT MORESBY, AND THAT LOW KEY APPROACH TO FON MIN OLEWALE MIGHT SERVE A USEFUL PURPOSE. TO DO OTHERWISE MIGHT, IN THE DEPT'S VIEW, GIVE MISTAKEN IMPRESSION THAT USG DOES NOT FEEL STRONGLY ABOUT THE ISSUES. THEREFORE, YOU ARE AUTHORIZED AT YOUR DISCRETION TO MAKE FOLLOWING POINTS TO OLEWALE:

-- USG IS STRONGLY SUPPORTIVE OF EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH REGIONAL FISHERIES AGENCY IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC AND LOOKS FORWARD TO WORKING WITH THE ISLAND COUNTRIES, INCLUDING PNG, IN ESTABLISHING A RATIONAL MANAGEMENT REGIME WHICH PROTECTS THE INTERESTS OF THE COASTAL STATE.

-- USG WAS SOMEWHAT DISAPPOINTED AT SUVA TO LEARN THAT GPNG WAS TAKING THE POSITION THAT THE INTERESTS OF THE ISLAND GOVERNMENTS AND THE INTERESTS OF THE USG WERE IRRECONCILABLE DUE TO PROVISIONS U.S. LAW REGARDING TUNA.

-- WE DO NOT SHARE THIS ASSESSMENT. WE BELIEVE THAT PRACTICAL ACCOMMODATIONS CAN BE FOUND WHICH WOULD RESULT IN CREATION OF AN ORGANIZATION THAT FULLY SATISFIES THE

DESIRES OF THE ISLAND GOVERNMENTS, INCLUDING LICENSING AND FEES, AND AT THE SAME TIME IS COMPLETELY ACCEPTABLE TO THE UNITED STATES. IT SHOULD BE CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD THAT THE US IS NEGOTIATING TO PROTECT ITS COASTAL INTERESTS AS WELL AS TO ESTABLISH A RATIONAL CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT REGIME. IN THE CONTEXT OF AN OVERALL AGREEMENT, THE TUNA INDUSTRY IS PREPARED TO ACCEPT LICENSING AND OTHER REGULATORY MEASURES.

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-- THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF THE U.S. POSITION ARE TO ESTABLISH A REGIME WHICH MAKES SENSE FROM A CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT POINT OF VIEW AND AT THE SAME TIME IS NOT SO RESTRICTIVE IN ECONOMIC TERMS AS TO PREVENT FISHING AT ALL. WE BELIEVE SUCH A SYSTEM CAN BE ESTABLISHED, AND THAT WE COULD ACCEPT IT, EVEN GIVEN THE RESTRICTIONS OF U.S. LAW.

-- IF THIS EFFORT IS SUCCESSFUL, AS WE BELIEVE IT WILL BE, THE NET RESULT WOULD BE THAT THE US WOULD ESTABLISH REGULATIONS AND MANAGE TUNA IN ITS OWN ZONE, A POINT WHICH IS LITTLE UNDERSTOOD.

-- THERE HAS BEEN MUCH COMMENT THAT THE US IS NEGOTIATING SOLELY TO PROTECT ITS OWN TUNA INDUSTRY. THIS IS NOT THE CASE. OUR OBJECTIVE WITH REGARD TO THAT PARTICULAR U.S. INTEREST IS TO PRESERVE THE OPTION OF ALLOWING THE U.S. INDUSTRY TO COMPETE ON AN EQUITABLE BASIS IN THE FISHERIES OF THE AREA AND TO ASSURE THAT ALL U.S. TERRITORIES WILL HAVE AN EQUITABLE SHARE OF THE BENEFITS. MOST NATIONS AGREE THAT THIS WOULD BE A GOOD THING. WE ARE NOT, HOWEVER, ATTEMPTING TO NEGOTIATE A PREFERENCE FOR U.S. FISHERMEN, ONLY UNIFORMITY WITH REGARD TO THE REGIME.

-- WE WOULD WELCOME FURTHER DETAILED DISCUSSIONS WITH PNG IF IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO RESOLVE OUR PROBLEMS. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT WE SHOULD ALLOW OUR DIFFERENCES TO IMPEDE THE PROGRESS OF THE NEGOTIATIONS, AND FOR OUR PART WE ARE WILLING TO DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO RESOLVE ANY DIFFERENCES OF OPINION WE MAY HAVE. NOTE: DEPT WOULD BE WILLING, IF PNG RESPONSE TO THIS POINT IS POSITIVE, CONFIDENTIAL

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TO FIELD SMALL TEAM OF EXPERTS TO VISIT PORT MORESBY FOR TALKS. THIS POSSIBILITY MAY BE MENTIONED AT EMBASSY'S DISCRETION. FYI: SUCH A VISIT WOULD PROBABLY BECOME PART OF BROADER TRIP THROUGH AREA TO DISCUSS NEGOTIATIONS WITH VARIOUS GOVERNMENTS PRIOR TO NEXT SESSION. END FYI.

-- WITH REGARD TO THE TIMING OF THE NEXT SESSION, THE U.S. BELIEVES THAT WE SHOULD MAINTAIN THE MOMENT WHICH WAS ACHIEVED AT SUVA AND THAT WE SHOULD THEREFORE CONVENE ANOTHER SESSION IN MARCH, EVEN IF IT DEVELOPED THAT THIS SESSION WERE NOT THE FINAL ONE.

5. FYI: OLEWALE MAY RAISE ISSUE OF EXPANDING MEMBERSHIP OF ORGANIZATION. WE HAVE RAISED QUESTION QUIETLY WITH NZ AND OTHERS, AND UNDERSTAND PNG IS ADAMANTLY OPPOSED. IF ISSUE ARISES, YOU MAY WISH TO USE FOLLOWING POINTS:

-- THERE MAY BE AN HONEST DIFFERENCE OF OPINION BETWEEN OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS REGARDING THE MEMBERSHIP IN THE AGENCY. PNG AND OTHERS WOULD LIKE TO ESTABLISH A "CLOSED GROUP" WITH MEMBERSHIP LIMITED TO COASTAL NATIONS IN THE REGION. WHILE WE UNDERSTAND AND IN SOME WAYS AGREE WITH RATIONALE BEHIND THIS POSITION, WE BELIEVE MEMBERSHIP SHOULD BE OPEN TO DISTANT WATER FISHERS AS WELL AS TO THE DISCRETION OF THE MEMBER NATIONS. OUR REASON FOR THIS IS TO ENSURE THAT THE DISTANT WATER FISHING NATION IS BOUND BY THE REGULATIONS OF THE ORGANIZATION, PARTICULARLY BEYOND THE LIMITS OF ANY FISHERIES ZONES. THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT WE WOULD SUPPORT, OR EVEN CONDONE, SUCH A NATION HAMPERING THE WORK OF THE ORGANIZATION.

6. WITH REGARD TO PROPOSAL REF D, DEPT IS DISCUSSING WITH COAST GUARD, BUT YOU MAY WANT TO POINT OUT THAT IN CONTEXT OF REGIONAL ORGANIZATION US WOULD CONSIDER PROVIDING SUCH ASSISTANCE. VANCE
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